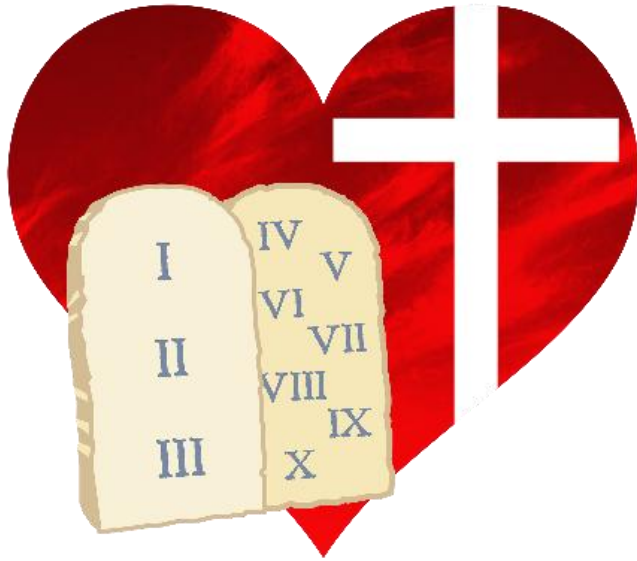


SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



Abiding in Christ's Love

May 5, 2024

AS WE GATHER

A treasured children's song, "I Love to Tell the Story," has a refrain that follows each of the stanzas penned by poet Arabella Katherine Hankey, repeating the simple words: "I love to tell the story; 'Twill be my theme in glory, To tell the old, old story Of Jesus and His love." The original Greek language in which John wrote his Gospel uses the word "love" either as a noun or a verb some nine times in the section of Jesus' words heard in the Gospel for today. Jesus wants His disciples and us to know the abiding power of His love. It is that love that compels us to love one another—and the "others" beyond our circles of family, friends, and other close relationships. We are blessed in hearing the "old, old story of Jesus and His love" anew today. May we be blessed in telling it out in love as well!

✠ PREPARATION ✠

HYMN "Listen, God is Calling" 833

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 146:1–2, 5, 10*

Pastor: Praise the LORD!

People: Praise the LORD, O my soul!

Pastor: I will praise the LORD as long as I live;

People: I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

Pastor: Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,

People: whose hope is in the LORD his God.

Pastor: The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, to all generations.

People: Praise the LORD!

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Let us now confess our sin to God, our merciful Father.

People: Gracious God, in heartfelt repentance we admit and confess our sinfulness. We are sin-stained people by nature. Each day we have sinned and done things we ought not to have done and have not done that which we are to have been doing as Your servants. We have not seen people in the loving way that You see them. We have not always been ready to care and quick to help. We do indeed deserve Your punishment in this life and for eternity. Trusting in Your mercy, we come to You for forgiveness. Our trust is in the merits of Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Have mercy on us, O God. Abide with us and grant us forgiveness of all our sins. By the power of the Holy Spirit at work within our hearts and lives, lead us into ways that reflect Your goodness and love.

Pastor: God is loving and merciful. He sees us with loving eyes and graciously hears our supplications. By the command of our Lord and as His called and ordained servant, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

(Share the Peace of Christ with those around you)

HYMN OF PRAISE “Jesus Shall Reign” 832

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray.

People: **Lord Jesus Christ, while we were still in our sins You chose us, laid down Your life for us, and called us friends.**

Pastor: By Your great love for us, inspire us to love one another that we may abide in Your grace and may bear fruit according to Your promise; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

FIRST READING *Acts 10:34–48* (People from every nation are accepted by God.)

Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by

God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, “Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *1 John 5:1–8* (The victory of Christ overcomes the world.)

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is he who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

VERSE *Romans 6:9; John 16:33b*

Pastor: Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him.

People: Alleluia. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world. Alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL *John 15:9–17* (Obeying Christ’s commands and remaining in His love)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fifteenth chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

HYMN OF THE DAY “I Love to Tell the Story”

I love to tell the story Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and His glory, Of Jesus and His love.
I love to tell the story Because I know ’tis true,
It satisfies my longings As nothing else can do.

I love to tell the story! ’twill be my theme in glory
To tell the old, old story Of Jesus and His love.

I love to tell the story; More wonderful it seems
Than all the golden fancies Of all our golden dreams,
I love to tell the story, It did so much for me,
And that is just the reason I tell it now to thee.

I love to tell the story! ’twill be my theme in glory
To tell the old, old story Of Jesus and His love.

I love to tell the story; 'Tis pleasant to repeat
What seems each time I tell it More wonderfully sweet.
I love to tell the story, For some have never heard
The message of salvation From God's own holy Word.

I love to tell the story! 'twill be my theme in glory
To tell the old, old story Of Jesus and His love.

I love to tell the story, For those who know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting To hear it like the rest.
And when in scenes of glory I sing the new, new song,
'Twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long.

I love to tell the story! 'twill be my theme in glory
To tell the old, old story Of Jesus and His love.

SERMON "To God Alone Be All the Glory!!! -Acts 10:34-48

CREED The Third Article of the Creed
and its explanation from the Small Catechism

Pastor: The First Reading today tells how the gift of the Holy Spirit was given to Gentiles as well as to Jews—which includes all the peoples of the world. Sharing words of faith confessed around the world, we speak together the words of the Apostles' Creed regarding the Third Person of the Holy Trinity and then express our confession of its meaning in the Small Catechism words of Martin Luther.

People: **I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Pastor: What does this mean?

People: **I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.**

In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers.

On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

This is most certainly true.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

We thank God for the Christian Church and pray that God's people may live confidently and would joyfully share the message of salvation in word and deed. Gathered by the Holy Spirit, we pray that we may be blessed with all grace and give evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. Lord in Your mercy. . .

People: . . .hear our Prayer

Pastor: We pray for our families, our neighborhoods, and our communities. We ask the blessing of our bountiful God on all those who share in our Christian fellowship and join with us in worship. Also, we pray for all who are part of the household of faith, whose presence here this day supports and strengthens us. Lord in Your mercy. . .

People: . . .hear our Prayer

Pastor: We also pray for those with special concerns and needs this day: those who are hospitalized or shut in, those who are grieving at this time, the unemployed and underemployed, the chronically ill, and all those whose needs are known to us, [*especially* . . .]. Lord, grant that we may bring Your blessing to situations of need in all places. Lord in Your mercy. . .

People: . . .hear our Prayer

Pastor: Most merciful God, we thank You for all those faithful people whose words and actions have guided us in the past, especially remembering those no longer with us on earth, who now share in Your eternal presence. By the working of Your Holy Spirit, direct us to walk Your servant way throughout our lives, seeing each person through Your loving eyes, until that day when we stand in Your glorious presence in heaven.

People: Amen.

OFFERING

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

PREFACE *2 Timothy 4:22*

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Blessed are You, O Lord of heaven and earth. We bless You now for sending Your Son Jesus Christ to give us assurance of Your fatherly care, knowing that all of our days are spent in God's sight. Directed by Your Holy Spirit and reflecting Your limitless love toward us, grant that we abide in Christ's love, awaiting the fulfilled promise of eternal life in Your heavenly kingdom, where saints and angels gather around Your throne in glory everlasting.

People: **Amen.**

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST *1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelation 22:20*

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

People: **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Pastor: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

LORD'S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

People: **Our Father who art in heaven,
 hallowed be Thy name,
 Thy kingdom come,
 Thy will be done on earth
 as it is in heaven;
 give us this day our daily bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses
 as we forgive those
 who trespass against us;
 and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For Thine is the kingdom
 and the power and the glory
 forever and ever. Amen.**

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: **Amen.**

AGNUS DEI "There is a Redeemer" 971 vs 1, 3

DISTRIBUTION of the Sacrament

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

Pastor: Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, once again You have welcomed us at Your Table of grace. Grant that this Sacrament that we have now received may strengthen us so that we may abide in loving service day by day. As we have shared in the blessings of Your Table,

grant that we live each day as Your people who see people around us as You see them and love them as You love them. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

People: **Amen.**

BENEDICTION *Numbers 6:24–26*

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.

 The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

 The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

People: **Amen.**

HYMN “Christ the Eternal Lord” 829

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series B, Quarter 2.

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